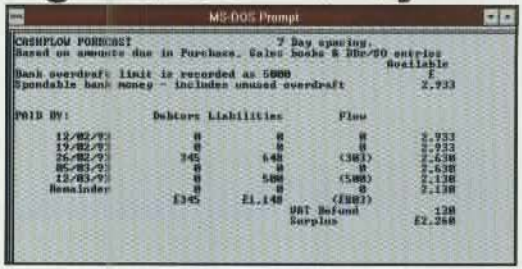
A.W.A.C.S: Accountancy Warning And Control Systems

KISS simply helps keep small businesses afloat


MS-DOS Prompt
CASHFLOW FORECAST 7 Day spacing.
Based on amounts due in Purchase, Sales books & PDs/PO entries
Available
Bank overdraft limit is recorded as 5000 £
Spendable bank money - includes unused overdraft 2,933
PAID BY: Debtors Liabilities Flow
12/02/93 0 0 0 2,933
19/02/93 0 0 0 2,933
26/02/93 345 640 (301) 2,638
05/03/93 0 0 0 2,638
12/03/93 0 500 (500) 2,138
Remainder 0 0 0 2,138
£345 £1,140 (£802)
VAT Refund 120
Surplus £2,258

Accounts package KISS keeps an eye out for signs of danger in a small business's cashflow, and warns you when to act.

Ask a bankrupt small businessman today the reason for his downfall and he is likely to blame the recession. Ask the appointed liquidator and he will attribute it largely to bad management. Mellor's Keep It Short and Simple (KISS) is an accounts package for the small business that helps bridge this gap in reasoning. Unlike mainstream products like Pegasus or Sun Accounts, it does not require you to have a detailed understanding of ledgers or double-entry book-keeping.

Instead, KISS provides you with the information and advice you might otherwise have to seek from an accountant. VAT handling is a good example of this. KISS highlights how many days there are to go before a VAT return is due for submission, which itself is undertaken as part of the program. You simply re-key in the figures that appear on the VAT return summary and make a note of the explanations for any discrepancies, ready for when the VAT man pays a visit.

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The small business user need have no knowledge of account coding, and you don't need to assign nominal codes to credit and debit items. Users with an understanding of book-keeping can choose to select pre-configured account codes or introduce their own by overtyping the supplied descriptions. KISS assigns all transactions auto-matically, relieving you of any need to grapple with that most difficult of concepts for the financially challenged—double-entry book-keeping.

KISS also acts as an adviser. Immediately after each log on, a Financial Position screen appears, showing projected summary cashflow up to the point at which the company will cease to be liquid.

In effect, it warns of any future financial problems without being prompted, and suggests how these can be avoided or overcome; for example, by extending your payment on a particular bill from 60 days to 90 days, by which time you should be able to afford it.

But be warned: KISS isn't particularly fast. It's written as a 10,000-cell Lotus 1-2-3 macro, compiled with the Baler XE2 compiler. We tested it on a Dell 20MHz 386SX system and found ourselves frequently watching the WAITING message. Fortunately, KISS is coprocessor aware, so fitting a 387 coprocessor—or better still, a 486DX—will improve the program's speed considerably.

—Bill Lumley

Keep It Short and Simple (KISS) 3.0

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In Brief If you run a small business and are concerned about the unprecedented failure rate of operations of your size, KISS is an excellent and easy to use minder for anyone who would prefer to use an accountant only at audit time.

Circle **413** on reader service card

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